597 Adoption was fairly common, though not always of lasting
842 satisfaction. On the other hand, in this watery domain, the
855 trouble (lambik) in raising children, mostly involving
ceaseless tending, was such that a childless woman was
accorded a little surface envy as one who had missed or avoid-
845 ed a lot of trouble. The attitude towards twins was
ambivalent. "Twins are unlucky because there are more mouths
to feed, more labour, trouble, and not enough milk. With
twins, a poor family will never rise again." "No one will
marry a twin for fear of begetting twins." "If twins are of
a different sex, one must die." Yet others considered twins
lucky "because they could be nursed at the same time, and
given the same things."

855 Wealth differences also affected these attitudes,
842 especially if babies came in close succession. Comments
184 heard were: "Why do poor people have more children than the
rich?" "Many visitors come bringing gifts to a rich parturient
because she is respected. No one likes to talk to a poor
person." "Those who have a baby oftener than every 3 years
will never be rich. Fortunately, 4 of my 7 children died."
The increasing cost of raising children was a concern. In
one of the few families that had plans for their children's
education, the father underwent a vasectomy after his 9 fine
children were born, because he "feared he would not be able
to feed them all." His wife, reassured that the operation had
not "hurt" her husband, "was glad he had done so."

• 847 Abortifacients and Contraceptives

[779] Episodes concerning abortifacients were whispered about
both Muslims and Buddhists. A Buddhist who induced abortion
was seen as impeding an individual's rebirth and disobeying a
religious prohibition on taking life, tenets which did not
obtain among the Muslims. Abortifacient medicines to be used
with abdomen-pressing were quietly sold by Muslims.[6] "Un-
married Muslim girls use them mostly," reported one Buddhist,
"and they almost die in the process." A Buddhist curer had
similar expensive medicine, but "unlike the Muslims, he will
842 not destroy the baby." Chinese boat-vendors also carried
contraceptive medicines (ya) which were secretly discussed
by wives. A husband reported his wife as saying, "Old ways

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6. Fraser (1913) reports that in the Muslim village of Bussembilan, abortions were openly practiced, (as if part of a Muslim cultural heritage).

Sometimes these aberrancies were viewed as desirable sources of supernatural power, but on other occasions, they were seen as a sign of demerit, caused embarrassment, and were suffocated at once (if alive), and buried.

If a woman died pregnant, her body was at once brought to the temple where the unborn child was removed surgically. The usual solacing sermon, rites "to lead the deceased to live in her right place in the next world," and cremation took place, with the fetus laid beside its mother so that it "would come out normally." The mother and child were separated to prevent a ghost which was double-powered. No prayers were chanted at home before exsection "lest they make the power of the spirit stronger." Moreover, any violent or premature death caused an angry ghost. The ghost of a premature child had a heavy load of sin, for its stay in purgatory, where sin was worked off, had been interrupted (Textor:262). An unscrupulous mɔ̄ was eager to get possession of any ghost for use in sorcery, and a double ghost was stronger than any other. Ghosts were obtained by plundering the mortuary chambers of the temple prior to cremation. By feeding (liang) it, a mɔ̄ controlled it. The ghost of a male infant was preferable because it was "stronger than that of a female." In the light of this situation, not only should the body of a pregnant woman never be left alone " so that no one can get at them (sic)," but a pregnant woman herself ought not to be alone.[26] The behavior towards the Rice Goddess, Mother Posop, who was "pregnant" when the grains in the stalk filled out, illuminated many of these attitudes: "Mae Posop feels weak, hungry, and uneasy. She is eager to taste sour and sweet foods. She is a woman and beautiful in her pregnancy." To allay her hunger the

26. In Cambodia, a pregnant woman might be murdered, even by her husband, so that the murderer might gain the malevolent power that possession of her now double soul would afford. (E.R.E. "Cambodia": p.159). This specific statement was not found in Bang Chan but might be part of the shadowy background to local reluctance to leave a pregnant woman alone.

APPENDIX

MUSLIM CUSTOMS IN BANG CHAN

The small Muslim minority in Bang Chan though maintaining its identity, lived scattered through every hamlet, with the heaviest concentration around the mosque at the southern edge of the village. The occasional inter-marriage of Buddhist and Muslim was eventually amicably adjusted to the community and the religion. Some Buddhists manifested a veiled hostility in calling the Muslims "stingy." One said, "Muslims have expensive medicine to induce abortion, after which they might kill the baby. A Buddhist would use this medicine to help deliver, but would not dare take life." The Muslim reputation as a source for powerful magic, especially for love and sorcery, bespeaks some edginess in the relations between the 2 ethnic groups, but Buddhists sometimes sought out the benefit of this magic.

In spite of these separatist tendencies, the Muslims were fully Thai citizens, and participated as equals with the Buddhists in the economic, political and much of the social life. The 2 groups were in many respects interdependent. The Muslims did not object to taking life, so acted as butchers for the Buddhists. Muslims were frequent patients of Buddhist mɔ̄, whether priests or lay. The only Muslim who did a little curing was the To Iman, head of the mosque, but few if any Buddhists came to him for cures. Because every mɔ̄ gave an annual ceremony of homage to his teacher attended by everyone who had benefited from those powers during the year, Muslims and Buddhists met amiably at several large feasts. These festivals were public displays, very competitive in feeling, of the success of the different mɔ̄. One became the largest of the village-wide festivities. Buddhist women attended the Muslim female midwife, teacher-rites, and vice versa. Buddhists and Muslims, especially the prominent families, attended each other's home ceremonies, such as weddings, tonsures, and that part of the ordination held in the home (the thaam khwan). Separate kitchens were established at large Buddhist ceremonies so that Muslims could safely adhere to their one dietary regulation, the avoidance of pork. No such arrangements had to be made at Muslim ceremonies for Buddhists had no food taboos, and loved Muslim cooking.

Midwifery was an area of frank, harmonious interchange, with midwives of either religion often attending women of the other. Buddhist male midwives were allowed by the Muslim husbands to attend their wives, though female attendance was preferred. Satisfaction was expressed by Buddhist women over